

February 21, 2017

To the Members of the Appropriations Committee,

Governor Malloy's budget proposal will have a devastating effect on the Town of Monroe. Under this proposal, Monroe is slated to lose \$6.5 million in state aid.

I watched Mr. Barnes explanation to our State Representative, JP Sredzinski, that this reduction is justified and Monroe can absorb the loss in state aid. Mr. Barnes couldn't be more wrong! Monroe is a middle class community. Many of our homes are ranch style or split level that sell in the \$300,000 range. Monroe does not have any million dollar homes. We have had one or two homes that have tried to list for a million dollars, but none have ever sold. In addition, Monroe is a referendum town that votes annually on our budget. Over the past seven years, the annual budget increase has been in the 2% range. Under this proposal, the tax increase to our homeowners would be over 14%. The taxpayers could not absorb this increase percentage; therefore the onus would be on the Board of Education to make drastic reductions to our schools to account for this \$6.5 million.

We have already gone through an analysis of what this reduction in state aid would mean to a community like Monroe.

It means:

- Elimination of 50 certified teachers
- Elimination of **ALL** 6-12 Sports
- Elimination of **ALL** Clubs and Activities
- Elimination of Full Day Kindergarten
- Elimination of **ALL** K-8 Art and Music
- Elimination of STEM Program
- Elimination of 10 Administrators/Instructional Leaders

This is just a small sampling of the major reductions to our schools.

These types of reductions will have a trickle down effect to our property owners. First and foremost, it will create a sub par school system. When looking for a home, most potential homeowners look to how good the school system is. It will cause property values to decrease, homeowners to be under water in their mortgages and Monroe not being a desirable community to move and raise a family in which will cause a housing collapse.

Monroe is being penalized for managing their Town properly, creating a fantastic school system and being fiscally prudent. Three of our schools are Connecticut Schools of Distinction and our High School is a National Blue Ribbon School.

Governor Malloy's budget proposal can not be implemented. It will cause devastation not only to Monroe, but to many other towns across the state and ultimately to the entire State of Connecticut.

Please stop this proposal and tell Governor Malloy that shifting the money from our suburbs to the cities is not the solution to the state's budget crisis.

Thank you,

Donna Lane  
Chair, Monroe Board of Education